other clearances and infrastructure planning at stage-I before a project is finally approved for implementation at stage-II.

(ii) Intensive monitoring of projects at various levels. This enables the monitoring agencies to identify constraints and help the management in taking remedial measures.

(iii) Indepth critical review of the progress by the project authorities and administrative Ministries.

(iv) Setting up of Task Force/Empowered Committees for speedy finalisation of contract packages, solving land acquisition and other problems.

(v) Close follow up by the Department of Programme Implementation, concerned administrative Ministries and project authorities with the State Government, equipment suppliers, contractors, consultants and other concerned agencies to minimise delays.

(vi) Inter-ministrial coordination and interation.

(vii) Emphasis on preparation of realistic project implementatioin plan.

(viii) Review by the Committee of Secretaries of the specific projects facing constraints.

[Translation]

Shortage of Houses

1617. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any survey has been conducted or is proposed to be conducted with regard to the shortage of houses in the rural areas;

(b) whether it has been ascertained blockwise as to how many additional dwelling units are required in the backward and poor areas of the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). As per the estimates, there is a housing shortage of 14.5 million houses in rural areas. Out of this, 14.5 million houses, 10.31 million houses would need upgradation and 4.19 million houses would need to be built. A programme for the construction/ upgradation of these houses will be phased in the following manner:

Year	House to be	
	Built	Upgraded
	(In lakhs)	
1996-97	10.5	25.8
1997-98	10.5	25.8
1998-99	10.5	25.8
1999-2000	10.4	25.7
Total	41.9	103.1

(d) Question does not arise.

[English]

Backlog of SC/ST

1618. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of SC/ST persons provided employment in Central services during the last five years;

(b) whether any backlog of posts reserved for them remain unfilled;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the time by which the backlog is expected to be cleared; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) The information is not centrally maintained.

(b) and (c). Under the 5th Special Recruitment Drive for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, As on 01.04.95, 17,228 backlog vacancies were identified for being filled up. Of the vacancies assessed under the Drive, according to reports received upto 30.06.96, 8,879 Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates have since been recruited.

(d) and (e). The Unfilled reserve vacancies were reported to be mainly due to non-availability of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates with requisite specialised skills or technical qualifications. Government have since launched the Sixth Special Recruitment Drive in 1996 for filling up backlog vacancies, as on 01.07.1996.

Report of Watch Asia

1619. SHRI JAGATVIR SINGH DRONA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the report